

## T&D: Tax cuts, insurance reform are congressman's priorities

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By GENE ZALESKI, T&D Staff Writer

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<http://www.timesanddemocrat.com/articles/2010/01/09/news/doc4b47f0b265946090485990.txt>

Job creation through tax cuts, health insurance reform rather than a "government takeover," strengthening national defense in the fight against terror and energy independence are among the priorities 2nd District Congressman Joe Wilson says will be on his 2010 legislative agenda.

"The first point on my agenda is creating jobs," Wilson told about two dozen attending a Friday afternoon press conference at Henry's Travel Plaza on U.S. 301. "We know that we have a crisis in our country with job loss."

Wilson said Orangeburg County's 17 percent unemployment rate as well as the 10 percent national unemployment rate is a concern and one that he says has not adequately been addressed legislatively.

"What has to be done (to create jobs) is an across-the-board tax cut," he said, noting tax cuts before the recessions in 1961 and 1981 ended. "By having tax cuts, then the public has money, which then stimulates and drives small businesses, which then creates jobs. It is the small businesses in South Carolina that create economic opportunity."

To help stimulate the economy, Wilson said he supports a home purchase tax credit that would give \$15,000 to buy a home over a three-year period.

Wilson said the way to handle health care is to reform health insurance.

"What we need is a reform of health care insurance, not a government takeover," Wilson said, noting he has hopes it can be a bi-partisan effort to reform health care insurance.

Wilson also expressed concern that the present health care proposal will result in job loss.

He referenced the National Federation of Independent Business as saying the proposed health care legislation would result in the loss of 1.6 million jobs.

The present health care plan "will create a system that simply will not be able to work," he said.

"It will be overwhelmed," Wilson said. "The demand and need for public services will overwhelm the system."

On the security front, Wilson said he is appreciative of President Barack Obama sending additional troops to Afghanistan. Military officials have said this is the correct decision.

Wilson expressed appreciation that Obama has acknowledged the United States is in a war and not fighting against civil criminals.

Wilson also said he is looking to provide for drilling off the coast of South Carolina for oil and natural gas, the promotion of hydrogen fuel cells and nuclear power capabilities.

"We can have clean coal development and energy production," he said, adding that cap-and-trade legislation would place a tax burden on industry and cost more jobs and make the United States less competitive in the global economy.

"I am very concerned that the cap-and-trade proposal will create higher electric rates and higher gas prices," he said. "Many of the people I represent ... commute to get to work. When people are commuting, this is not recreation. This is a cost of living."

During the press conference, Wilson also offered his condolences to the family of Dr. Shingara S. Sandhu, a retired Claflin University chemistry professor who died Wednesday.

While in Orangeburg, Wilson also met with The Times and Democrat a few days prior to the Friday press conference and reflected on a year that saw him in the national spotlight after he shouted "You lie!" as Obama spoke to Congress in September about health care.

Wilson said he remembers the date very well when his shout was heard around the nation. It was 9-09-09.

“It was a town hall moment,” Wilson said, noting that he has been at many town hall meetings where passion was displayed. “I was listening to the speech and I disagreed with what I heard. I picked up the passion.”

VIDEO: Getting to know: Joe Wilson

Wilson told The T&D among his concerns is the lack of transparency surrounding the current health care debate.

He said he would like to see a bi-partisan conference committee meet in an open hearing.

“You would take the bill side-by-side, House and Senate ... and then you vote to adopt either the House or Senate version,” Wilson said. “The president has said he even intended for conference committees to be covered by CSPAN publicly. If they had not made such a big deal that it was going to be covered by CSPAN. But by setting that standard and totally disregarding it, that makes it much more important.”

Wilson’s visit to Henry’s Travel Plaza was just one of several stops in Orangeburg he made as part of his annual New Year District 2 Legislative Agenda Tour. He also stopped at the Orangeburg Workforce Development Center on Joe Jeffords Highway.

T&D Staff Writer Gene Zaleski can be reached by e-mail